

The Commercial

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NORTH-WEST PRESS AND DISALLOWANCE.

The journals of the Eastern Provinces seem to be as decided in their differences upon the question of disallowance in Manitoba, as are those of the Prairie Province itself, and it is a noticeable fact that each sheet decides for or against according to the school of politics it has been advocating. The question is made by them one to be viewed from a political stand-point only, while in Manitoba, individual interests have to some extent obliterated the party line in connection with allowance, and some journals have forsaken party ties altogether to join in the cry against the policy of the present government. This fact at first sight, seems a strong argument in proof of the unanimity of the province against disallowance, as the press of a country is supposed to be little else than a mirror that reflects public opinion. It is questionable, however, if the press of Manitoba truly represents the public opinion of the province on disallowance, and there are peculiar circumstances connected with it which would lead us to believe that it does not.

In a former issue THE COMMERCIAL showed how much of the opposition to disallowance arose from a class of real estate speculators, whose schemes (many of which will not bear close investigations) are in conflict with the Dominion Government's policy. To this might be added the fact that the country press of Manitoba is pretty much controlled by this same class of speculators.

The gushing admirer of terse newspaper literature is very apt to dwell upon the incorruptibility of the press, and accept every slashing article as the outpourings of an honest and patriotic heart; but a little inquiry into how North-western newspapers are started, would convince such individuals of the folly of such a belief. In the starting of a new country paper in Manitoba, a bonus to the editor and proprietor is as necessary, as it is to secure the advent of a railway (especially one built for colonization and philanthropic purposes). The bonus is supposed to be given by the citizens, but the citizens in nine cases out of ten comprise two or three persons or perhaps only

one, who own the town site, and as a natural consequence, want a newspaper to advertise their property in. In a very large proportion of cases the newspaper could not exist on purely commercial principles, and the original subscribers to the bonus have to carry it financially in their arms. Country editors in the North-west are not men of very strong opinions on political or railway subjects, and it is but natural that they would drop onto the side where the bread and butter was to be had. As schemers with aims which conflict with disallowance are prepared to throw aside party ties for personal gain, so the literary parasites which cling to them echo the cry of the manger they are fed at, and become the most stalwart supporters of what they call the provincial rights policy. The argument of an almost united press is certainly a very plausible one, but when the terms of unity are considered, the argument is not quite so powerful. It is safe to state, that four out of five of the country newspapers which have sprung into existence in Manitoba during the last two years, have been floated upon the bonuses of real estate speculators; are owned by joint stock companies in which speculative element holds control, or are secretly owned by some politician or party desirous of political honors. Even the Winnipeg dailies are not all free from politician's plasters, and like their smaller brethren of the country have, when a question opens up, to watch carefully which way the political cat jumps, and follow her course, erratic and tortuous though it may be.

The press of the Eastern Provinces have a perfect right to discuss this question of disallowance, and the people of the North-west feel that they are taking an interest in this new and progressive country when they do so. In justice, however, to the classes who are laboring for the commercial and industrial upbuilding of Manitoba, and who, we claim, have as a rule, taken but small part in the anti-disallowance movement, we ask that the newspaper statements from such sources as we have described be not taken as a true representation of the feeling of the province. It is to be regretted that political and other power in Manitoba is as yet, too much in the hands of the speculative element, and not enough under the control of those who are connected with commercial enterprise. This fact is due, no doubt, in a great measure to the apathy

of the leading merchants, manufacturers and others upon such subjects. It will remedy itself in time, no doubt, but while it lasts, the feeling of these classes on subjects of public interest must and will be misrepresented, and in no way has it been more so, than by the "Fairservices" of the Manitoba press.

A MINING BOOM.

Progress in any new country is liable to go in fits and starts, and there is no reason to expect, that the North-west will prove any exception to this rule. The real estate boom, which happily subsided before its inflation ended in disastrous collapse, had its progressive effects, and luckily brought almost no reaction. There must be some sphere in which another fit or start will be inaugurated, and everything points at present to mining operations in Kewatin as that sphere. For many years the existence of valuable metallic resources has been a settled fact in this district, which, however, have been so arranged by nature, that both capital and patient labor are necessary for their successful development. Such resources may for a time be unsought for by capital, but with the growth and prosperity of the North-west, the necessities for their development are coming forward. Already several companies with each extensive capital stock are in the field, and others are in course of formation. It is safe to state that before six months have elapsed companies whose aggregate capital will reach several millions of dollars will be engaged in mining operations in Kewatin. Within the last few months old miners and experts from many parts of the continent have prospected around the Lake of the Woods, and each and every one has given his opinion that gold producing quartz of a very rich description is to be found in paying quantities in this district, and that successful gold mining operations must soon be carried on there.

As in all other gold fields, there will no doubt be a great amount of disappointment in regard to the success of different workings. Many inexperienced persons will no doubt make foolish investments and expend great labor to no profit. Such has been the case in the richest gold fields in the world, and must necessarily occur in Kewatin. As already stated, the gold of this district can only be secured by the spending of capital and patient labor, and the dreamer who expects to pick up